"To promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values which inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the rural church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies: Toward a Christian Rural Civilization."

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The Social Ideals of the Churches For Agriculture and Rural Life

PRONOUNCEMENTS BY OFFICIAL PROTESTANT AGENCIES

By Benson Y. Landis*

THE leaders with social vision in the American Protestant churches in the early years of the 20th century were mainly concerned about urban situations. The turning point came in 1925, however, when the National Council of Congregational Churches adopted its statement of social ideals that contained seven declarations on agriculture. There have been numerous rural pronouncements in the intervening years. One difficulty about them has been that they have never been gathered together. This document puts them into one place, where they may be studied and compared, and may form the basis of such further action as rural and urban churchmen may wish to take. It also obviously reveals what has not been said!

A Summary and Interpretation

The following is a brief summary of what has been said:

Man and the Land

"The future of democratic America is largely dependent upon the economic and social independence of the American farmer. . . . We cannot tolerate . . . any system of farm tenancy that reduces the tenant to a state of intolerable poverty and toil. Every effort should be made to secure for the farmer and his family economic and social justice, adequate social institutions. . . ." declared the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in 1937.

There have been other most important statements on the relation of man and the land. The Congregational National Council in 1925 stated that a translation of the ideals of Jesus into agriculture means, among other things, "that the farmer shall have access to the land he works, on such terms as will ensure him personal freedom and economic encouragement, while society is amply protected by efficient production and conservation of fertility." This statement was also adopted by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States in 1926.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1928 was even more specific regarding farm ownership: "The tiller of the soil shall be encouraged in his efforts to own the land he farms. . . ." But the General Conference of the new merged Methodist Church of 1940 did not continue to say so, and the current Methodist Discipline does not carry these words. It says: "We stand for the safeguarding of the farmer and his family, and for the preservation of all the values of rural life."

Federal Council Statement

The most comprehensive interdenominational formulation of social ideals was that adopted unanimously by the quadrennial session of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in 1932. The original social ideals of 1908 had been industrial. In the 1932 draft were frequent references to agriculture, and these influenced denominational resolutions in subsequent years. In this declaration it was said that "the churches should stand for": "Economic justice for the farmer in legislation, financing, transportation . . ."; "extension of . . . social services to the farm family"; "a living wage . . . and above this a just share for the worker in the product of industry and agriculture"; "encouragement of cooperatives . . . among farmers. . . ."

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Town and Country Work, The American Baptist Home Mission Society
Town and Country Department, The Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches
Town and Country Unit, Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
Department of Domestic Missions, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church
Committee on Town and Country, Home Missions Council and Federal Council of Churches
Department of Race Relations, Federal Council of Churches
New England Town and Country Church Commission
The Town and Country Department of The Ohio Council of Churches and Religious Education

*The Cooperatives and Farmers**

The most frequent references to agriculture and rural life in the Protestant pronouncements are in support of economic cooperation among farmers. Some of these declarations were made before the large number on economic cooperation that followed the visit of Toyohiko Kagawa of Japan to the United States in 1935-36.

The Congregationalist National Council of 1925, the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States of 1926, and the Methodist Episcopal General Conference of 1928 all declared: "There shall be every encouragement to the organization of farmers for economic ends, particularly for cooperative sales and purchases."

Quotations from the Affirmations

The quotations that follow contain either the full text or representative portions of the main *official* declarations regarding agriculture and rural life:

National Council of Congregational Churches, 1925: "We believe in making the social and spiritual ideals of Jesus our test for community as well as for individual life; in strengthening and deepening the inner personal relationship of the individual with God, and recognizing his obligation and duty to society. This is crystallized in the two commandments of Jesus: 'Love thy God and love thy neighbor.' We believe this pattern ideal for a Christian social order involves the recognition of the sacredness of life, the supreme worth of each single personality, and our common membership in one another—the brotherhood of all. In short, it means creative activity in cooperation with our fellow human beings, and with God, in the everyday life of society and in the development of a new and better world social order. Translating this ideal into agriculture means:

"1. That the farmer shall have access to the land he works, on such terms as will ensure him personal freedom and economic encouragement, while society is amply protected by efficient production and conservation of fertility.

"2. That the cost of market distribution from farmer to consumer shall be cut to the lowest possible terms, both farmers and consumers sharing in these economies.

"3. That there shall be every encouragement to the organization of farmers for economic ends, particularly for cooperative sales and purchases.

"4. That an efficient system of both vocational and general education of youths and adults living on farms shall be available.

"5. That special efforts shall be made to insure the farmer adequate social institutions, including the church, the school, the library, means of recreation, good local government, and particularly the best possible farm home.

"6. That there shall be a widespread development of organized rural communities, thoroughly democratic, completely cooperative, and possessed with the spirit of the common welfare.

"7. That there shall be the fullest measure of friendly reciprocal cooperation between the rural and city workers."

(Also adopted by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1926; and with modifications, by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1928. See below.)

General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1928: "Translating this ideal, 'Love Thy God' and 'Love Thy Neighbor,' into agriculture means: (a) That the tiller of the soil shall be encouraged in his efforts to own the land he farms, and society be protected by efficient production and conservation of fertility. (b) That the cost of market distribution from farmer to consumer shall be cut to the lowest possible terms, both farmers and consumers sharing in these economies. (c) That there shall be every encouragement to the organization of farmers for economic ends, particularly for cooperative sales and purchases. (d) That an efficient system of both vocational and general education of youths and adults living on farms shall be available. (e) That special efforts shall be made to insure to the farmer adequate social institutions, including the Church, the school, the library, means of recreation, good local government, and particularly the best possible farm home. (f) That there shall be a widespread development of organized rural communities, thoroughly democratic, completely cooperative, and possessed with the spirit of the common welfare. (g) That there shall be the fullest measure of friendly reciprocal cooperation between the rural and city workers."

General Conference of the Methodist Church, 1940: "We stand for the safeguarding of the farmer and his family, and for the preservation of all the values of rural life."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1935: "We would remind our churches that the economic and social problems which perplex and torment the nation today are not confined to our cities and great industrial centers. These burning questions affect no less the men and women who live upon the farms and who till the soil. We believe that the reinvigoration of rural communities with spiritual life and social passion is one of the imperative needs of the times. We urge, therefore, that our rural pastors and leaders recognize their responsibility for bringing the ethic and spirit of Christ to bear upon the economic and social problems faced by our American farmers, and study to use every opportunity for making the church an increasing force for improving the spiritual, economic and social life of these people."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1937: "The future of democratic America is largely dependent upon the economic and social independence of the American farmer, and he should not be permitted to sink to an inferior status by reason of world market conditions or price and crop conditions within the nation, which

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* For detailed information regarding the church and cooperatives, see *Manual on the Church and Cooperatives* and *The Church and Credit Unions*, both compiled by Benson Y. Landis. They are available from the Committee on the Church and Cooperatives, Industrial Division, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York. Price ten cents per copy.

ountry a philosophy of cooperative living and cooperative action within the enlarged rural community. This applies o church programs as essentially as to any others.

"Second, all rural interests must be organized on a scale ample enough to secure the necessary facilities and upport as public education, for example, is now generally being organized. The individual unit of operation in eligious work may be large or small as circumstances dictate, but the unit of planning and organization should at east approximate that of other essential community interests. This obviously looks toward the method and point f view of the larger parish, which is, basically, to unite all the churches within a common social area.

"Third, the program of the rural church must be adapted to altered conditions, to a higher standard of living nd a generally higher cultural level. It must be such as will contribute to the solution of actual life problems while aaving in view the attainment, as its ultimate objective, of an enriched rural life guided by a religious motive."

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1932: "The Churches should stand for: Practical pplication of the Christian principle of social well-being to the acquisition and use of wealth; subordination of specilation and the profit motive to the creative and cooperative spirit.

"Social planning and control of the credit and monetary systems and the economic processes for the common good.

"The right of all to the opportunity for self-maintenance; a wider and fairer distribution of wealth; a living wage, as a minimum, and above this a just share for the worker in the product of industry and agriculture.

"Safeguarding of all workers, urban and rural, against harmful conditions of labor and occupational injury and disease.

"Social insurance against sickness, accident, want in old age, and unemployment.

"The right of employees and employers alike to organize for collective bargaining and social action; protection of both in the exercise of this right; the obligation of both to work for the public good; encouragement of cooperatives and other organizations among farmers and other groups.

"Abolition of child labor; adequate provision for the protection, education, spiritual nurture, and wholesome recreation of every child.

"Protection of the family by the single standard of purity; educational preparation for marriage, home-making, and parenthood.

"Economic justice for the farmer in legislation, financing, transportation and the price of farm products as compared with the cost of machinery and other commodities which he must buy.

"Extension of the primary cultural opportunities and social services now enjoyed by urban populations to the farm family.

"Justice, opportunity, and equal rights for all; mutual goodwill and cooperation among racial, economic, and religious groups."

Executive Committee, The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1935: "The present plight of the share-tenant and share-cropper in the wide areas of the cotton growing districts should enlist the concern of the churches. . . . The situation urgently calls for measures which will make it possible for farmer-tenants to have farm homes on land of their own, and the Executive Committee of the Federal Council recognizes with satisfaction that the problem is now under consideration in Congress, and urges that effective legislation to this end be enacted."

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1932: "There are unique values in rural life which American public opinion has always emphasized. These values should be preserved. The rural home and the farm linked with it have never been generally regarded merely as a means of speculative profit. They should not become so. Land is a very special kind of property even though it may be bought and sold. It is the source of food, of raw materials. It provides for healthful homes. Organization among farmers is essential for the best use of land, quite as much as for the maintenance of prices.

"The rural church has an opportunity to influence public opinion beneficially on the broader agricultural interests and also on the specific problems of farm laborers and tenant farmers. It can effectively insist that rural children shall have educational and religious opportunities equal to the best; that there shall be adequate facilities for health, social welfare, and recreation in all rural communities. Urban churches may support such demands and help to see that they are met by just taxation, a generous sharing of surplus wealth, and a rational cooperation between urban and rural forces."

National Study Conference on the Churches and a Just and Durable Peace, 1942: "Agriculture has a dual importance, both as a way of making a living and as a basis of family and community life. Our economic system must become servant and not master in maintaining the socially significant services of agriculture, such as feeding the world and producing the organic raw materials essential to industry."

Commission of the (English) Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility. Towards a Christian Britain—Agriculture and Rural Life, 1942:* "The true relation of man to the land, the renascence of village life, and the creation of a right relation between country and town, and between agriculture and other industries, are subjects of so great importance to the national future that their consideration brooks no delay. The Commission is pursuing the subject further, and hopes to issue a fuller statement as soon as possible.

"Meanwhile we commend with strong emphasis the following passage from the findings of the Malvern Conference, 1941:

" 'We must recover reverence for the earth and its resources, treating it no longer as a reservoir of potential wealth to be exploited, but as a storehouse of divine bounty on which we utterly depend. This will carry with it a

* The chairman was Dr. William Temple, then Archbishop of York, now Archbishop of Canterbury.

"We must create within the Church a revaluation of the dignity and worth of rural workers and their task. Firmly imbedded in our pattern of thought is the standard of estimate that a man's worth is based on the size of the parish of which he is rector. We hold this is a false and mischievous attitude. We must develop the realization that the worker in the rural field has a great task and demands ability differing only in kind but not in degree from that of his brethren in metropolitan areas. Too long the policy has been that the rural mission is a training ground of the theological school graduate and a stepping stone into city work. This makes for a rapid turnover of clergy which is a great deterrent to effective work."

Commission on Christian Social Action, Northern Baptist Convention, 1935: "A . . . definite objective for the denomination should be to inculcate in individuals worthy economic motives and incentives that through them the basis of the economic system may be shifted from that of acquisitiveness to that of service. This would involve: . . .

"The consideration of types of economic organization already operating within the present system in which social motives are given freer play, such as consumers' cooperatives for meeting consumers' needs by pooling resources, etc., and credit unions, in which there is a centralized fund from which loans for production or providential purposes are available to members at a fair rate of interest and on terms which recognize character as collateral. . . .

"We . . . recommend that the rural church take the initiative in promoting economic justice by interpreting the economic situation to the farmer, by encouraging the organization of the farm population to secure increased income, reduction in the expenses of distribution of goods, and increased ownership of the land. Factors for reaching these goals are consumers' and producers' cooperatives."

Northern Baptist Convention, 1939: "We would make the following specific recommendations:

"In view of the inequitable distribution of wealth to the agricultural population of our country, leading in its extreme form to the plight of the sharecroppers, we affirm the right of our agricultural population to an increased share in the annual national income."

Northern Baptist Convention, 1941: (Recommended) "That we urge such local and national measures as will bring economic justice and social opportunity to farmers and all substandard income groups;

"That we call our people to sympathetic and earnest study of the problem of refugees and of migrants, and urge people, churches, and state and national societies to develop an adequate ministry to these groups. . . .

"That we encourage the experimentation with producer-consumer organizations which seem to carry out the spirit of the Master."

Committee on Family, Public Morals and Sabbath, General Conference of the Evangelical Church, 1934: "We . . . declare ourselves in support of the following specific principles and practices as aids toward the achievement of a Christian social order: . . .

"The restriction of speculation in the essential commodities of life through governmental supervision of exchange operations.

"The economic improvement of those engaged in agriculture by a more equitable distribution of the wealth produced upon the land."

The International Convention of the Disciples of Christ, 1938: "We believe in the right of workers to protection against the hazards of unemployment, illness, disability, and dependency in old age. We believe that this protection should be extended to such industrial, agricultural, domestic, and other similar groups of workers not now included under the Social Security Act. We, therefore, welcome the proposal of the Social Security Board to make beginnings in this direction."

Commission on Christian Social Action, Reformed Church in the United States, 1935: "The church can perform a real service to the nation by helping to interpret the problems of the farmer to the city-dweller and the problems of the city-dweller to the farmer. . . .

"The farmer needs credit. He is entitled to it on terms which assist him, not destroy him. He has a right to necessary implements at a fair price and a fair price for his products. The spread between the price paid the farmer for milk and wheat, for example, and the cost to the consumer is too great to escape notice. When we view the situation realistically, it is apparent that the basic need is to reduce progressively the amount of profit-making on farm products between the time the farmer sells and the consumer buys. Both the farmer and the consumer are entitled to share in the resultant saving. Farmers have already sought to protect themselves through cooperative elevators and selling and buying associations. Progress lies in the extension of the cooperative principle and method not in its abandonment."

Commission on Christian Social Action, Reformed Church in the United States, 1936: "So that justice may be done to the farmer and the agricultural worker on whose welfare depends the welfare of all, we commit ourselves to work for:

"a) The establishment of a system of agricultural credits which will adequately meet the needs of the farmer and protect him from exploitation;

"b) The establishment of a fair price for the implements he needs and for the products which he raises and for transportation of those products to the markets;

"c) The extension of the benefits of technological improvements and educational and cultural opportunities to rural families."

Home Missions Council and Council of Women for Home Missions, The National Conference on the Rural Church, 1936: "Elements of Rural Church Policy. It seems clear that the solution of . . . problems must take into account certain practical assumptions.

"First, the possibility of rural progress depends to a considerable extent on our success in developing in the

he is powerless to control. We cannot tolerate in America any form of peasantry or any system of farm tenancy that reduces the tenant to a state of intolerable poverty and toil. The condition of share-croppers in many regions is one of such abject poverty and hopelessness that Christians must bestir themselves to alleviate these conditions at once, and to rescue these people from suffering and despair. Every effort should be made to secure for the farmer and his family economic and social justice, adequate social institutions, including church, school, library, means of recreation, and good local government, and a modern sanitary home."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1938: "The Church, having recently studied . . . the rural American scene, is morally bound to continue such study to a more through understanding, and to work for such measures, locally and nationally, as will give larger financial, social, and spiritual opportunities to our whole farm population, exalting family life, education, health and wholesome social conditions. The continued depression in the farm areas causes grave concern, because of its disastrous effect upon the cultural and religious life of the people, reducing multitudes from ownership to tenancy. We commend the efforts that are being made to improve the economic status of the farmer and would urge more serious study of ways of securing adequate financial returns for farm produce. We commend all measures that will enable the rural church to minister to the full needs of its people and of the community, and would suggest a wider use of the Larger Parish Plan with a program set up to meet so far as possible the total needs of the people."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1939: "We call attention to the responsibility of our Church to take part in the rehabilitation of rural life. We would dispel the generally accepted opinion that the Presbyterian Church is primarily a church of urban people. The majority of our people live in small towns and in rural areas. The rural church is the training school for leadership in the great city churches, since the city fails to reproduce itself, and grows and maintains itself by migration from the country. We are disturbed by the continued decrease in the membership rolls of rural churches. We must not forget that the fate of the whole Church is involved in the life of the rural church.

"We would call attention to the rise of rural church fellowships—groups made up of rural ministers and teachers in colleges of agriculture. We heartily commend the work of these groups, and we urge rural ministers to join and cooperate with them in their projects affecting the value of rural life. . . .

"We deplore the fact that the inequalities that scar the face of society are all too prevalent in the Church. We recognize that the Church cannot escape in some measure these evils, but our Church is too complacent about them. Especially is this true as regards the inequality between the average rural church and the great city church. . . . It is not a sound policy for the maintenance of the ministry of our Church, that a minister's salary should depend on the economic strength of the local church. . . . It is not seemly that the Church bewail the inequalities of the secular order and sit complacent while the same evils are in her own household. . . ."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1940: Rural insecurity. "We deplore the insecure situation of sharecroppers, migrant workers, and all other underprivileged groups. . . . No democracy is sound or safe when such large numbers of its peoples are thus unfavorably situated."

General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1942: "Our entire civilization is utterly dependent upon the rural areas for food; in a large degree for renewal of urban personnel and for conservation of values, economic, social and spiritual that are inherent in rural life.

"We commend study and action dealing with rural problems such as fair return for rural production, land ownership, tenancy and labor, cooperative organizations, suitable standards of rural living and of social and cultural opportunities and especially of the spiritual foundations for a wholesome country life.

"To this end we commend consideration and application as may be feasible of the various forms of rural church cooperation, of weekday religious education, of cooperation between churches and the other agencies for rural betterment, together with the upbuilding of life and activity in rural churches."

General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1931: "A program of Rural Work. The rural problem . . . is essentially a national one. The duty of facing it is a corporate and national duty. Nothing less than a program approved, shared in and supported by a church in its national capacity and expressive of its national consciousness, can be adequate. . . .

"An effective national program must be projected, guided and administered by an organization functioning continuously and nationally and so securing breadth and continuity of policy and unity of effort. We must have responsible and recognized representation in the organic life of the Church. . . .

"The rural problem demands specific consideration from whatever angle it is approached, whether social, educational, economic or religious. This is dictated not because of any essential difference between rural and urban human nature, but because of the very obviously different conditions under which the rural and urban people live and work.

"The specialized nature of the problem requires specially trained leadership, both men and women; demands adequate provision for systematic and scientific research, survey and study of the conditions that must be met, and an organized agency for educating the Church as to the needs and opportunities of rural America. . . ."

Joint Commission on Rural Work of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1940: "The need, the essential . . . is a vitalizing spirit, arising from the acceptance of worthy ideals. We must subordinate the temporal values now characteristic of urban life, and accept as our guide the more permanent values of rural life. . . . The church has a great role to play in rural as well as urban life. Indeed, the nation's destiny depends . . . upon whether it arises to the emergency and teaches the values associated with the family and rural life. The nation has undervalued agriculture and overvalued industrialism and commercialism." (Concurring in the above generalization of a statement by O. E. Baker, U. S. Department of Agriculture.)

deliberate revival of agriculture, both by securing to the agricultural labourer good wages and to the farmer a secure and just price. We regard this as indispensable to the true balance of the national life.'

"The government should be asked to give assurances that this will be the immediate direction of public policy."

The Malvern Conference also stated: "The restoration of agriculture must be utilized for the revival of true community, which is possible in a village as it is not in great cities. Here something can be done to start the movement away from mass psychology towards the development of personality in fellowship."

Some Catholic Statements

The Roman Catholics are the most thoroughly committed to the wide diffusion among the people of the ownership of property, including land, and Pope Leo XIII, in the prophetic Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* of 1891, popularly called *The Condition of Labor,* wrote: "Men not only should possess the fruits of the earth, but also the very soil. . . . The law should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many people as possible to become owners." Papal encyclicals, it should be stated, are issued after study by Catholic scholars in many countries. The pronouncement of 1891, for example, was preceded by what has been called "an extraordinary collaboration of minds." The doctrines of 1891 regarding land were reiterated by Pope Pius XI in 1931, in the letter named *Quadragesimo Anno,* popularly "Reconstructing the Social Order." Also, the present Pope, Pius XII, in an address in 1941, referred to the necessity for "vital space" for the family. In the United States the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, is the spearhead of Catholic rural discussion and pronouncements, recently gathered up in *The Manifesto on Rural Life,** later quoted, and other publications.

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 1939: "Importance of the Rural Question. The well-being of the nation rests to a large measure on a healthy agrarianism. . . . Right living conditions are essential for spiritual and cultural development. Reconquest of the soil, which has been depleted through improper use and exploitation, is a fundamental consideration, for human erosion is closely related to soil erosion. Reconquest of ownership is another fundamental consideration, inasmuch as ownership is essential for independent, successful, and self-satisfying farm life. The multiplying of family-size, owner-operated farms is an important safeguard against the exploitation of our greatest natural resource, namely, the land. . . .

"The rural problem is complex and varies in type and in intensity with geographical areas. Wrong attitudes toward agriculture and wrong appraisals of what constitute fundamental values, deeply rooted in the thinking of both rural and urban groups, are barriers that must be surmounted. Although the rural problem presents great difficulties, we cannot admit that it is insoluble, for the fate of human society rests on the solution. The rural problem is so important that it should engage the greatest minds of the nation."—*Manifesto on Rural Life.*

National Catholic Social Action Conference, 1938: "The following points give popular expressions to . . . basic principles: . . .

"A balance must be maintained between industrial and agricultural population; and between the rewards for industrial and agricultural activity.

"A healthy agricultural system will encourage the family farm rather than the commercial farm.

"A Christian Social Order involves decent housing for all the people."

Pope Pius XII, 1941: "Regulations concerning private property should safeguard the family, the roots of a nation's greatness. In particular, the 'living space' that matters is the 'vital space of the family,' which should be protected by the colonization of agricultural workers in undeveloped areas. . . .

"Of all the goods that can be the object of private property none is more conformable to nature than the land, the holding on which the family lives and from the products of which it draws all or part of its subsistence. . . ."

Some Jewish Statements

Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1942: "Tenant Farmers, Sharecroppers, Migrant Farmers, Farm Laborers. The evil practices of selling 'the needy for a pair of shoes' and taking 'from him the exactions of wheat' (Amos) still exists in our land and in our times. The social and economic conditions of sharecroppers, tenant farmers, poor whites, and Negroes have barely improved in the South. Tenant farmers are forcibly evicted often only in order that their landlords and the planters might obtain the federal farm benefits and subsidies which they otherwise would have to share with their tenants. Many of the latter are then compelled to become farm laborers without permanent employment, or migrant farmers, Okies, Arkies, etc. Peonage still exists in the South. Child labor is still rife on the farm. Through a devious system of bookkeeping, checking, weighing, through scrip-money and high prices at plantation or company stores, the landlords are in a position to and some do take undue advantage of their tenants, croppers and laborers who are only too often kept illiterate and uneducated.

"The Commission recommends that government controls be placed over evictions; that the federal program for tenant farmers and others be extended (not reduced, as some, using war needs as an excuse, are proposing); that the application of the Wagner Labor Relations Act and the Wages and Hours Bill be extended to farm labor; that all security measures be extended to farmers; that child labor on the farm, as well as in the city, be strictly prohibited. The proper rehabilitation of small farmers and farm workers calls for a decent living wage or for an adequate return for farm products, federal aid in the health program of rural areas, such as housing, rural medicine, public health, insurance, hospitalization, etc.; also federal aid for rural education, where high birthrates are combined with low incomes, and where shocking illiteracy prevails, especially in the South. The dissemination of birth control information should be legalized in all states where it is now legally banned, and the services of birth control clinics should be made available for the privileged and the underprivileged, in rural as well as in urban areas."

* The *Manifesto on Rural Life* by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee.

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